Students need to develop the skills, and the accompanying confidence to be able to speak aloud in any circumstances and to not just follow the lead of others who may be more self-assured than themselves. For students to merely mumble along, or whisper under their breath is not good enough, and falls far short of the expectations of a person who has invested the time, money and effort that it takes to learn a second language. Whilst there are innumerable activities for practicing speaking in the classroom, below I would like to share some strategies that have worked well for me when it comes to improving an adult student’s overall speaking skills.

1. Have students stand up in front of the class and give a presentation.

Abstract

This paper describes an investigation that was conducted over the course of my final year teaching practice placement in a Girls’ Primary School in Fujairah. The research was carried out in a classroom of twenty Grade Five Arabic-speaking girls where English is taught as a foreign language. I decided to investigate the teaching of speaking, and this topic was chosen because I noticed over the four years of teaching practice placements in my degree program that reading and writing skills are mostly emphasized in EFL classrooms in Emirati state schools, but speaking and listening are largely ignored.

In addition, English language teachers in state schools in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) tend to give priority to finishing the course book, and they do not concentrate on speaking activities that much. Furthermore, students do not have the opportunity to communicate in English because Arabic-speaking parents, family and friends surround them, so I decided to engage these ten and eleven year old students in communicative activities that would improve their speaking, specifically by using songs and puppets.